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IN MEMORIAM

N.M.S.

Nancy

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NANCY M. STERETT,

BORN DECEMBER 3D, 1864

DIED MAY 30TH, 1887

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INDIVIDUALITY.

"My Lord is large, my Lord is strong,
Giving He gave; my me is mine.
How poor, how strange, how wrong
To dream he wrote the little song
I made to Him with love's unforced design."

* * * * *

"Pass kinsman Cloud, now fair and mild:
Discharge the will that's not thine own.
I work in freedom wild,
But work as plays a little child—
Sure of the Father, Self, and Love alone."

[*Sidney Lanier.*]

In Memoriam

When a complete and rare personality passes away from earth, for the sake of living witnesses it may be permitted to make brief mention of the qualities that endeared Nancy Sterett to her friends.

On the morning of Memorial Day, after a swiftly fatal illness, her bright young life ended, courageously as she had lived. The personal traits that made her so distinct in girlhood, and so gracious in maturing womanhood, were those of a large nature, a serious mind and a sunny spirit.

An only child, those nearest to her seeking to fill her life with enjoyment and to cultivate every faculty with all that refinement of taste could suggest, in making the ideal life they sought for her, she still bore all the graces of a beautiful sim-

plicity. Her sunny eyes questioned the deepest meanings of life. Sorrow never touched her, yet she sought to penetrate, as student and thoughtful helper, the problems that press closest to suffering humanity. While she gathered the stored riches of receptive minds, there was ever present with her the view of individual duty. It is not often that the artistic nature and the creative gifts that were hers, are allied with the deep sense of responsibility in living. Enjoyment she had to the full—of art and nature's treasures of beauty in the old world and the new; yet always with the impulse to put to dutiful uses the gifts of kindly fortune. Her executive talent found satisfaction in organizing and carrying out helpful plans for poor children of the hot city—a private enterprise, a modest Fresh Air Fund—occupying her last Summer to the exclusion of many recreations.

A keen sense of humor and of the relative proportion of events kept her large mind individual, and it was with charming satire that this child united the widely differing interests that opening womanhood offered to her choice. The artist, the philanthropist, the reasoner, each claimed a part of her friendship and her allegiance, but no limitations of either narrowed this ample nature.

She would have carried through a longer life, without assertion, but always with distinction, her rare individuality. Her faculties tended to order, to completeness, to a mastery over means and ends. In our modern existence that is so largely made up of shreds and patches, she had learned the secret of concentration, and directness of aim.

One more lovely trait must not be left unspoken; her singular purity of thought. She had knowledge, but not a shadow of sophistication, and the virginal

sweetness of her nature sparkled through all her brilliant speech. Her young life was so complete that it scarce seems, to those who stand nearest, shorn of a single day in its perfect round; or in any sense cut off in its flower—for the fruitage and the flowering hung together upon this young and stately tree.

These things are told in gratefulness that such a life has been; that so alert an intelligence was conjoined in her with joyousness in her affluent friendships, and with a dramatic and dutiful sense of the meanings of life. H.

June 5th, 1887.

"What could our love have done? We tried
To hold her fast: cried
To the tender Hand
That we might understand
The right way, day by day—
That she might stay."

* * * * *

"Perhaps if we could see
Where she dreams now of you and me;
Look once upon her face,
We might be glad such grace
Was shown our glorified—
Be satisfied."

PORTRAIT LETTERS

BY HER FRIENDS.

"Though sight be changed for memory, love ensures
What memory, changed by love to sight, would say."

Philadelphia, July 22d, 1887.

* * * * So it is with those who loved and reverenced Nancy, the radiant figure so lately with us. As the months lengthen out since my little cousin left us, we are daily forced to a further realization of our loss. It springs up constantly in some new connection, keeping fresh the sense of deprivation. Each day brings the involuntary question, as to what *she* would have said or done in reference to passing action. When the news came of an alarming phase of her last illness, one who loved her dearly said "how it would illuminate death if she should be taken." This sense of radiancy was felt by all who came in contact with her. No one who saw her seemed capable of forgetting her, so deep was the impression of her individual personality. Her little shelf of favorite books is a partial index

to the direction of her thoughts. She took keen delight in studying the structures of plants, and the microscopic organisms which form the connecting link between the animal and vegetable kingdoms. She strove to master the details of political economy, towards a better comprehension of the problems of the time. Her mind was pre-eminently judicial, for she never forgot there are two sides to a question. Her fine taste in art made her an instance of the truth that genius is not limited to a special work, but can manifest itself in many directions. Nancy was instinct with vitality; she delighted in planning and executing schemes for the welfare of those oppressed by circumstance. Under its crown of sunny hair, the girlish head was busy with bright thoughts for the good of others. That little white hand, held out so helpfully to the unfortunate, was no whiter than the pure heart within. Nancy's fair young life

was a confession of faith. She left to others dramatic forms and pompous systems of religion, and went quietly about her Father's business, for she loved her neighbor better than herself. By ministering tenderly to those who sit in darkness, and in answering the unspoken prayers of helpless little children, Nancy showed us how to live; thus unconsciously inverting the crabbed theology, whose lack of faith finds voice in the words "teach us how to die." We shall hear no more on earth that joyous little voice, the tale of those blessed days is told; but her gentle spirit abides with us, so long as we are worthy of its sweet presence. JEAN.

New York, July 15th, 1887.

* * * * Reading just now what St. Paul says of the Resurrection—of the "natural body" and the "spiritual body," I have been led to wonder what may be the differences between "natural" and "spiritual" in our sweet Nancy;—to wonder whether there will be a change at all other than that which comes by growth—a development of faculties only hinted at here—a ripening of qualities we saw in the bud. It seems to me that Nancy, on the other side of the door we call Death, through which she passed a little while ago, cannot be very unlike the radiant being we knew in her earthly life. I think of the happy nature that—failing to express the fulness of its delight in mere words, overflowed in little ecstatic motions, like the flutterings of a bird in a bough:—I recall the glad voice, which, even to the

ear that could not catch the words it said—sounded always like the voice of one who tells joyful news: —I remember the clear spiritual insight and sound judgment that led her to form opinions of fact and estimates of character with almost unerring precision, such as comes to most only by the experience of many years, but to her by the crystal purity of her mind, through which the light of Truth passed without gathering any stain of earthiness or color of prejudice, giving a new meaning to the beatitude; "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God;"—not merely "shall" see in future, but do see now, and in the "light of His countenance" distinguish clearly good from evil.

In all these characteristics of hers, and a hundred more that my memory recalls, I see little need or possibility of change, and Nancy in Heaven seems so like Nancy on Earth, that I am sure of her con-

tinued love for and interest in those she loved so loyally here, and I hope it may be a part of her new work to bring comfort and strength to the sorrowing hearts of those she still loves, though the veil that shuts her from their sight is drawn impenetrably between. C. K. H.

The Adirondacks, June, 1887.

* * * * * * *

Somebody has said "to know a person well you must know the books they read." When you read these two books ("Winter Sunshine" and "Colin Clout's Calendar"), with Grant Allen's "The Evolutionist at Large" you will have the key to Nancy's character as I knew her. This was the point that drew me so strongly to her—her knowledge of plant and insect life—which far exceeded mine, and was always given so modestly. Our constant talk about them naturally led us on to graver and more serious subjects, and here I was amazed! That this *child* had for herself thought out and decided, to her own satisfaction, the great mysteries of Life and the Beyond—was really most remarkable when we consider that her life had been spent in love and luxury,

in large cities and amid all the conventionalities of the world. She once said to me—"I cannot con-"ceive of any person of ordinary intelligence, who "has given the subject any thought at all, believing "otherwise than in the theory of Evolution."

* * * * * * *

This was not the side of Nancy's character that most people knew, for she had so much reverence and respect for those who honestly differed from her. She was never aggressive nor importunate with her own higher ideas of life, and yet she was no coward if called on to express her opinion. Often I have seen her, with a blush that mounted to her forehead, quietly and with a gentle dignity maintain her own views, even when she knew they would be unpopular.

* * * * * * *

E. S. C.

Conanicut Island,

July 13th, 1887.

* * * * * * *

Who that has once seen her can ever forget that dainty little head with its neatly brushed spun-silk hair;—that delicate brow with the shadow of some new thought nearly always resting on it; those soft blue eyes with their dark lashes, and the bolder outlines of her nose and mouth which gave indication of the firmness of character for which she was remarkable; those firm lips which never opened for anything trivial or commonplace, from which came utterances wise beyond her years, or childlike in their innocence, now humorous, now remonstrating with extravagant speech in others, but never cutting or sarcastic herself. * * * *

Katharine.

New York, July 23d, 1887.

* * * * * * *

I always thought Nancy's most marked trait was loyalty to her friends. She made friends with rare discrimination—was not lavish with her friendships till she had weighed them in the balance of her well-poised mind; then if approved, she took them to her heart and right loyally did she hold them there; and no detraction would she brook. Her likings were pronounced, aggressive—her dislikes few and silent, and if she ever found she had been mistaken, she quietly transferred her affection to those more worthy, but never with a word of anger or reproach. She was no worshiper of position, wealth or fashion. Rich and poor were alike to her if they were pure and true. She loved "society," in its more sensible forms. Among "her girls" she was gay and spark-

ling, and loved the dance or romp as much as the gayest—but these things, while enjoyed to the full, were not essential to her. They were only incidents in her life; they were the play of a nature full of serious purposes and ambitions. The chief of these was to do good and be helpful to her kind—and in any tale of want or sorrow, her desire to "lend a hand" shone in her sympathetic eyes and instant effort. She was supremely a child of nature—a summer's child. The winter had its pleasures of class and lecture, music and entertainment, but the summer with its out-door life, its flowers, and ferns, and grasses, meadows, bogs and possible mountain climb and brookside ramble, were very life to her. Sunshine was her element. In it she lived, absorbed and radiated it, bathing all her surroundings in its warmth and brightness. C. F.

Washington, July 10th, 1887.

* * * * * * *

I love to think how much our dear little "Double"† was loved and appreciated, and that others have the power to some extent to express what I feel but cannot say. * * I can say truthfully, while all that has been said and written of Nancy is true, yet it falls far short of the whole truth. I cannot do it, and no one has yet expressed to my satisfaction my idea of Nancy after I really knew her; for there was something about her which made itself felt in a different manner from that of any other person I ever knew. Her humor, her quaint, bright, funny moods made us laugh, but I always felt there was a deeper something which I could not fathom or describe. I now know that it was the earnest,

† Double cousin.

beautiful soul that shone through her eyes and speech.

She had the strongest individuality I ever knew. Everything she said and did left its impression, and although it is two years since she visited us, there is hardly a room in the house that is not strongly associated with something she said or did.

* * * * * * *

N. H.

Mount Everett, Berkshire, 8, 28, 1887.

* * * * * * *

Every day my heart goes out to thee in tenderest sympathy, for each step of our way here we miss the blithe voice and charm of a presence that were with us last year. Every mountain path is filled with bright memories of her. To-day, standing by the lake-side among the pitcher-plants, I could think only of her who was the life of the expedition last August, and who amused us so with her joyous exclamation—"I never was so wet before and I "never had such a good time."

Everywhere we go we recall the things she said —so often they were expressions of overflowing happiness. She was the brightest, sweetest young girl I have ever known ; her life was like a beautiful poem, and her memory and example are a sacred possession to those who have known her.

* * * * * * *

O. R.

[A favorite poem.]

THE SUNDEW.

"A little marsh plant, yellow green,
And pricked at lip with tender red.
Tread close, and either way you tread
Some faint black water jets between
Lest you should bruise the curious head.

You call it Sundew: how it grows,
If with its color it have breath,
If life taste sweet to it, if death
Pain its soft petal, no man knows:
Man has no sight or sense that saith.

My Sundew, grown of gentle days,
In these green miles the spring begun
Thy growth ere April had half done
With the soft secret of her ways,
Or June made ready for the sun."

* * * * *

New York, June 10th, 1887.

* * * * * * *

Among the many pleasant pictures that memory delights to recall, is one at Lakewood in 1881, when she, just passing from a sweet girlhood into a thoughtful and efficient womanhood—I first met Nancy. With all the buoyancy and life of a healthful girl, there was also a quiet calmness of purpose that gave promise of much that was good in future years. * * * * * *

When we met again on your return from Europe and California, life had become to her a field of earnest endeavor, and while the same brightness and pleasure were to be found in it, for that brightness and for that pleasure its more serious questions were not to be passed over. Her purposes were high,

pure and holy, and she lived up to them. Her death means simply more perfect fruition than was here possible.

* * * * Be what there may beyond, one cannot but remember that what here is imperfect, is there perfect; here finite, there infinite; and in so remembering, in a sense to rejoice even in the time of greatest sadness. While therefore we cannot but grieve at separation, in the grieving let us not forget to be grateful that to us are left so many lovely memories. W. P.

Camden, South Carolina, June 5th, 1887.

* * * * * * *

Last afternoon, just opposite the Inn, as I watched the merry group of young people enjoying their first lawn tennis set, my eyes wandered to the beautiful garden, and my thoughts at once to the pleasure Mrs. W—— and myself had in knowing your daughter. I recalled how I used to think of her as the sweet Cherokee rose—so delicate, so lovely, so fresh, so pure. So pleasant were the thoughts that ran through my mind that I, in idleness, took from my pocket two or three letters that I had neglected to forward to my wife (who was on a visit to her father) and pencilled on one of them a thought of our "Cherokee Rose." Something then prompted me to open that letter—

little did I dream that it would tell me of the death of that sweet flower—thoughts of whom I had but a moment before written on the cover.

* * * * * * *

D. R. W.

"WHAT DOTH THE LORD REQUIRE OF THEE, BUT "TO DO JUSTLY, AND TO LOVE MERCY, AND TO WALK "HUMBLY WITH THY GOD?"—Micah VI, 8.

What difference can any creed or doctrine make in these satisfying words! *Nancy.*

This text and these few words of comment upon it, were written by dear Nancy, not quite two years ago. The manner in which she made this short confession of faith, as it may be called, was most characteristic. One winter afternoon, Nancy had given a little "tea" to a few friends, and, among the young girls who laughed and chatted around her, was one with whom she had had, the day before, a somewhat serious conversation. As the merry party dispersed, Nancy drew this friend aside and

told her that she would find, in a particular place, a note addressed to her, to be read when alone.

This note, which was discovered on Nancy's bureau by her girl-friend, was found to contain simply the text and Nancy's words quoted above—nothing more. It was at once a gentle protest against intolerance and a simple declaration of personal belief, and neither the words nor the way in which they were given, can ever be forgotten, by her, to whom they were addressed. M. S.

[From a letter to a friend In America.]

Paris, April 1st, 1883.

* * * * * * *

You were so kind as to write about "Zoe" in your letter to the "Wide Awake" from Paris, for which sweet mention I want to thank you so much.

And now we are in Paris, and just beginning to enjoy the first signs of spring, and, because it is spring, I have been thinking more than usual about the pleasant voyage we had together across the Atlantic last year about this time. The year has been a most delightful one to me in so many ways, and we all thoroughly enjoyed our three months' stay in England, Scotland and queer little Wales.

On the first of August we landed at Calais, and made our way through Belgium and up the disappointing Rhine towards Switzerland, where we were greeted with snow and rain at every lake and pass until we were glad to get into Italy.

I will not tell you how much the Northern cities pleased me, but go directly to Florence. Don't you think it the most lovable of all? I enjoyed the picture galleries and frescoes without ever wearying of them, and I took some painting lessons of a Mr. ——, a friend and protegé of Mr. Ruskin. His methods might be called Pre-Raphaelite, but the atmosphere is so glowing that his pictures do not lose by so much detail. I need care and precision, and so, though I like the broad, dashing style better, you see it was no bad lesson for me to be under the exacting eye of my talented teacher. * * * * With a half perfected sketch of the Ponte Vecchio, we left Florence and went to Rome in time for the Christmas festivities. * * * * *

Affectionately yours,

Nancy M. Sterett.

[From a letter to the same.]

New York, April 12th, 1885.

* * * * * * *

I have often wished this winter that you were still writing "To-day" papers in "Wide Awake," that we might have the benefit of your ideas on the questions of the day. "We," in this case, means a little club of girls which meets once a week to discuss current news, literature and art. The subject may be studied or not, as the girls choose, but two members must thoroughly acquaint themselves with all facts concerning it and be able to argue for or against it. A general debate follows the presentation of the subject. We have really enjoyed the weekly discussions and they lead us on to further individual search and study. Still it is hard to find

good authorities for statements on present events; and thus—as I said before—I have often thought how much light a certain kind old friend of mine might throw on the political aspects of 1885.

* * * * * * *

Most affectionately yours,

Nancy M. Sterett.

South Congregational Church,

Boston, August 23d, 1887.

* * * * * * *

Her first letter recalls her very distinctly, in the midst of that attractive circle of young people on the "Germanic," all of whom were so fond of her. She interested me at once, then, because her hope of enjoyment in the journey before her was so genuine, and because she was so wholly free from the nonsense, which, rightly or not, is generally ascribed to young girls just leaving school. She was not in the least a prig, but she did have, all the same, a very clear idea that she was going to Europe for a real purpose—and in that purpose she was heartily and conscientiously interested. You

will remember how fond all the girls in that bright circle were of her.

It seemed to me it was unusual—perhaps I might say unexpected—that a girl, not long let loose from school thraldom, should be so eager, in one way or another, to continue study—or what is the same thing as study—a constant observation of the causes and motives of things, as well as the outside forms.

You will see in one of these letters an allusion to some articles of mine in the "Wide Awake" magazine, which she had seen. That reference to it illustrates what I mean, and the letter of a later period shows that the drift of her mind and life ran that way—ran in the determination to know what could be known of the social condition and prospect of the world in which she lived. One, writing of her the other day, used the phrase "vitalized religion," which seems to me to express very happily the

motive power, which, even when she was little more than a school girl, seemed to direct or impel her wishes and movements.

More than thirty years ago Mr. Judd, who wrote the remarkable books "Margaret" and "Philo," wrote to me of a sister who was very dear to me—and who had been lifted from world to world, as your dear child has been—that "some people are "placed in this world by a good God to make it "more beautiful—to make life more charming, and "to be a joy to all people who meet them."

I am sure that this was the part your daughter had given her in the few years of her life here; and this is what she is, and such is the mission she has in hand now, in the larger life of a world which has more senses, wider range, and fewer limitations than harass us here. I am sure that we gained one more guardian Angel when we lost the sight of her face.

And till we meet in the better vision, we can never tell in words how much she encourages, and directs, and warns us in her present ministry.

But this we have—the memory of a life of charming purity and of self-forgetting activity, and this will always be a blessing to us.

Very truly yours,

Edward Everett Hale.

Southampton, L. I., August 22d.

* * * * * * *

When you ask me for the story of Nancy's connection with the St. Ursula, you ask me for a history of the club. It evolved itself very naturally and gradually from her desire to read and study with a few intimate friends. It was started after her return from Europe in '83. We had many talks together then about pictures, more especially those of the Italian school; above all others the series by Carpaccio, in Venice, representing the legend of St. Ursula, interested us most deeply. Painted at a time when the beautiful mediæval word "lady," had just received the coinage of reality, it seemed to us that the old Italian master's heroine could well repay our attention. Nancy was so delighted when she discovered Ursula to be the patroness of all school

girls, and her name was given to the class then forming. And as Carpaccio's fair-haired princess in these quaint and truthful pictures, which Nancy loved, is connected with the figures roundabout, so within the frame of our little society, was Nancy connected with each of us. In looking back, she is always the bright centre of every group. I can remember we met, once last winter, in her rooms, to listen to a short essay and afterwards an informal talk about etchings. Of all the meetings of the year it will now be the most affectionately recalled. She sat near the window with a large book of etchings before her, showing us examples of the various methods. We plied her with question after question; but her fund of information seemed impregnable, and we ended in a chorus of congratulations. Then afterwards as hostess—Nancy was our model hostess—how winningly she appeared to us! Her

gentle gracefulness and bright sympathy were the realization of our ideals, and Nancy's friendship will surely be with us while we try to approach these. The club is only an incident in our friendship, which had begun several years before. It was woven by a thousand threads of intercourse, bright ones with scarcely an exception. I cannot easily pick them out one from another, even if I would. I want to keep the whole as one, a strong and perfect memory through life. J.

June 23d, 1887.

* * * * * * *

I cannot close without telling you how much your dear Nancy resembled her for whom she was named, and how gratifying it was to us, who knew the original, to see her granddaughter showing in her development the characteristics which distinguished Nancy M. Sterett among the women of half a century ago. The alert intelligence, the quick sympathies, the radiance, the unobtrusive Christianity which worked by deeds and not by words, and lifted heavenwards always, the loving to do good, the unselfishness, the joyousness and gayety of heart, her grace, gentleness and dignity of manner, and that subtle magnetism which insensibly drew every one near—all these and more were Nancy's inheritance from her who has preceded her to that Heaven where we

may believe they are now together enjoying that "blessed immortality," which is promised to those who live as they lived.

* * * * * * *

A GIRL'S THOUGHTS.

"She spake such good thoughts natural as if she always thought them—

And had sympathies so rapid, open, free as bird on branch,

Just as ready to fly east or west, whichever way besought them.

* * * * * * *

In her inmost lightness there is truth—and often she speaks lightly—

Has a grace in being gay which even mournful souls approve,

For the root of some grave earnest thought is understruck so rightly

As to justify the foliage, and the waving flowers above."

[*Mrs. Browning.*]

[From a letter written in England to a friend.]

Bideford—North Devon, August 8th, 1883.

Dear Miss ———:

Here we are at the "little white town of Bideford, "which slopes upwards from its broad tide-river, "paved with yellow sands, and many-arched old "bridge, where salmon wait for autumn floods, "toward the pleasant upland of the west." To think that the bow window of our cosy sitting room actually looks out on that very tide-river, and the many-arched old bridge! I cannot believe that a little farther down the river, at Torrington, lived the Rose of Torridge, and that to-morrow we actually go to Clovelly, and will see Clovelly Court! I do so wish for you to be here, as I know how interested you would be in these places that Kingsley

has made classic by his delightful pen. Particularly am I reminded of you here, as you first told me to read "Westward Ho!" when we were at Lake Mohonk, and we began to read it aloud together. You were so devoted to Kingsley and I cared not a scrap for him, simply because I did not know anything about him, or his noble, unselfish life. Since we came to England, however, we have read his "Life and Letters," and have found them most entertaining, full of wit and humor, and of deep religious thought; and his calm belief in, and sweet interpretation of God's Word is so helpful and cheering. What must have been Kingsley's own personal influence! He has come to be one of my heroes, and is he not entitled to a high place in every one's affections, for though such a famous man, he gave his *best* to all he met, whether it was a peasant of his parish or some learned scientific

friend? Ah! My dear ———, I feel as if I had learned a great deal in the past two years—how much more have I still to acquire, through, perhaps, harder work.

* * * * * * *

August 10th.

We spent a part of yesterday at Clovelly—dear, quaint, unique Clovelly! Unlike any other place in England, and resembling more an old Italian town, scrubbed, and bright with English neatness. It lies between two precipitous cliffs, and looks from above for all the world, as if some village of the plain had been washed down by an ancient flood, and heaped pell-mell in the bottom of the glen. No carriage ever enters its steppy street, and it is as much as a stranger can do to climb it, resting now and then upon a door-step for breath.

* * * * * * *

NANCY.

[From a letter written just after her nineteenth birthday.]

New York, December 10th, 1883.

My Dear Miss ———:

Ever since leaving you on Wednesday I have been trying to find a quiet time to write you and answer your sweet letter; perhaps if you *did* misunderstand me a little I am glad of it, for otherwise I should not have received the letter in which there is so much encouragement for one just entering on the first serious period of life.

Don't you think the *end* of anything rather sad? The autumn is always, tho' fascinatingly, sad, yet one knows that the spring will surely come again.

And the parting with a friend who has paid you a visit is sad also, though you may, in all probability expect to meet next month—it is the end of a visit,

and if other pleasanter ones are in store for you both, yet never perhaps under the same circumstances. And this is the feeling with which I leave my girlhood behind me, regretting it as a pleasant stay in a charming land, though I know that beyond there is something I will enjoy more, and appreciate fully. I cannot help looking back—there is regret for not having done, perhaps, all I might with my girlhood, not doing things I might have done, and leaving things unsaid that might have made a difference to some one, and if I have not lived this period of my life aright, ought there not to be some trepidation in entering upon one in which, as there are greater possibilities of performing, there are greater fields of work that may be left *un*done?

I know that at nineteen there are things without number that I enjoy, of which I never dreamed when I was sixteen. I know that I am capable of

appreciating things and caring for them differently from what I did three years ago, and I suppose and hope this will go on as I grow older. If you think I have raised a lofty standard for my future, you may be sure I am often discouraged in thinking it may not be the right one; and that I shall often be in need of the help of one who has solved these problems for herself, and successfully reached a perfect womanhood.

Lovingly, your own

NANCY.

February 18th, 1886.

My Dear Polly:

* * * * * * *

I am tearingly busy now, as the next meeting of the "As You Like It" is to be Sally's and mine, and we have decided on a german, and I am making some of the favors myself. I was so tired today that I gave up several things—a german this evening too, and am saving up for a dance tomorrow night. Last night I went to see "One of Our Girls"—a very clever piece of acting by Helen Dauvray, who takes the part of an American girl in Paris, who shocks one by her free and easy manners, but is thoroughly sweet and sincere. That is the great point—sincerity! How many people really have it? and then sweetness tempers the brusqueness that sincerity often gives to one's

words. Yes, these are the best things to be—sincere and sweet. My dear little Polly, I must say good-night.

Ever yours, lovingly,

NANCY.

New York, November 28th, 1886.

My Dear J———:

* * * * * * *

We have been making a regular tour of the theatres lately, and enjoyed immensely "Jim the Penman," in which Agnes Booth acts exquisitely. We have already enjoyed the fine acting and sweet voice of Lehman in "The Prophet."

Teas and receptions are briskly skipping in, and though I dislike them so much, one we go to to-morrow will be well worth the trouble. It is given to Henry M. Stanley by two ladies, and will be pleasant, undoubtedly, on account of the celebrity of the guest. I see that Lieut. Greely calls him Stanley *Africanus*, a clever and appropriate name for him.

You seem to be quite interested in the Shakespeare-Bacon controversy. It makes no difference

to me who wrote the plays—in themselves they stand for genius; but it makes a great deal of difference in my estimate of Bacon, whether he wrote them or not. I have heard a great deal of criticism on the books you mention, as taking the Bacon authorship for granted, and finding it conclusive; for my part, on reading Bacon's essays, I see little or nothing of the simple, tender view of life, which is often Shakespeare's greatest charm.

I have read lately Tolstoi's "War and Peace," and am now reading Darwin aloud with a friend every Monday. I have not yet begun many classes, as I do not wish to get tired out early in the year. Have thought of joining several large ones, but do not like that kind of study. Three girls and a teacher, is my idea of a model class. You can then ask questions and have some rational discussion. The St. Ursula still goes on. I have the subject

next time—Etching and Whistler—and intend to vary my performance, half being spoken, half read. Remember me kindly to ———

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NANCY.

[From a letter to a girl friend who had asked her counsel.]

HOBKIRK INN,

Camden, S. C., March 26th, 1887.

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DEAR ———:

There is a great deal of prejudice in the world, and of such various kinds that you cannot take other people's opinions (as true or good) of the literary work of the day, or the past; what might do you an immense amount of good might be worthless to another; but—being sure of your own principles, in that you are strong for purity and truth, read *everything* and consider it. Bacon, though such a mixture of good and bad, has this little saying:—'Read, not to believe or confute, but to weigh and consider.' Read both sides of a

question, and if you think you may be influenced by certain people's opinions, do not seek them, but try and find your own.

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Lovingly always,

NANCY.

"The Master of the House opens the House, "and then he distributes the books. He says "* * * some words * * * and then He "closes the House."

[*Nancy talking in her dreams the night before she died.*]

Or soon, or late, sweet-lipped young oracle
(Like broken lily, giving out its fragrance to the last);
Or soon, or late, the books we hold, are closed.
To some the empty page, the vacuous long-drawn
count of useless days;
Some writ with invisible ink between the lines
That tell of honorable action; and some
All luminous with close-set deeds that shine far out
Into the darkling world. Such book thy grandsire
holds.
Thy own, so early filled, and straining at its clasp
with record golden,
Why knew we not, alas! thy jewelled page could
never wear to old?

Farewell, friends: yet not farewell:
Where I am, ye, too, shall dwell.
I am gone before your face,
A moment's time, a little space.
When ye have come where I have stepped
Ye will wonder why ye wept;
Ye will know by wise love taught,
That here is all, and there is naught.
Weep awhile, if ye are fain—
Sunshine still must follow rain;
Only not at death,—for death,
Now I know, is that first breath
Which our souls draw when we enter
Life, which is of all life centre.

Edwin Arnold.

(*Farewell at Azan.*)